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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS SPECIAL SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: W. McLENNAN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Chapter ___

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL COOPERATION

(Agenda item 3)

Inter-Agency Task Force on Price Statistics, including the International Comparison Programme (ICP)

1. The report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Price Statistics, including the International Comparison Programme (E/CN.3/1994/9) was introduced by the representative of the Convener of the Task Force, the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

2. The discussion concentrated on the Task Force's mandate. Most members of the Commission expressed the view that improving coordination of world-wide consumer price index (CPI) work, especially in the context of the intercountry comparison of rates of inflation, should be the main priority for the Task Force. The Task Force was expected to address the issue by determining current practices, by considering whether existing standards were sufficient and by identifying any problems that might exist.

3. There was considerable discussion about the use being made of the output of ICP. It was accepted that the ICP methodology was still evolving and needed

refinement; significant comments were made, however, about the fact that results were being used without the users fully appreciating their experimental nature, thereby raising concern among government statisticians in some countries. It was agreed that there was a need for an objective appraisal and evaluation of ICP, but that that work would be of lower priority for the Task Force and would be undertaken after the CPI component had been dealt with.

Action taken by the Commission

4. The Commission:

(a) Decided that coordination of work on consumer price indices was the first priority of the Task Force;

(b) Agreed that the objective appraisal and evaluation of ICP should remain on the Task Force's work programme but that it would be of second priority, following the work on consumer price indices;

(c) Requested the Task Force to clarify its work plan and formulate specific actions that were to be achieved before the forthcoming session of the Statistical Commission.